

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 2, 2009

The Honorable John Oliver
Chairman, Transportation, Housing and
Urban Development and Related
Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Latham
Ranking Member, Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development and Related
Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman and Mr. Ranking Member:

We respectfully request that you fully fund the renewal of Section 8 Tenant-Based and Project-Based Rental Assistance and provide additional funds for 200,000 new, "incremental" tenant-based vouchers in the FY 2010 Transportation-HUD Appropriations Act.

These programs provide critical assistance to 3.3 million low-income households, nearly all of which are elderly, people with disabilities, and families with children. We very much appreciate the successful efforts made by the Committee on Appropriations in 2009 to restore full renewal funding for the project-based Section 8 program in the face of a multi-billion dollar shortfall, as well as to provide an increase in funding for tenant-based assistance.

Today, with unemployment and poverty rising as a result of the economic recession, it is vital that the FY 2010 Transportation-HUD Appropriations Act provide enough funding to ensure that the Section 8 rental assistance now being used by low-income families will be fully renewed in 2010.

In addition, we urge you to provide funds for 200,000 new, "incremental" tenant-based vouchers. Reports from around the country indicate that homelessness is rising as a result of the severe economic downturn. Yet even before the current recession, more than 8 million low-income households were struggling to pay housing costs that exceeded half their total income, a severe burden – and this number had grown by 2 million, or 32 percent, since 2000. While the need for aid has grown, Congress has not funded a substantial increase in rental assistance since 2001. Only about 1 in 4 eligible low-income families receives federal rental assistance, and there are long waiting lists for assistance in nearly every community.

The Section 8 voucher program has received broad support from across the political spectrum as the most flexible and cost effective way to provide rental assistance. A 2002 report by GAO concluded that the voucher program is cost effective, and HUD recently described the program as "one of the Department's and the Federal Government's most

effective programs....widely recognized as a cost effective means for delivering decent, safe, and sanitary housing to low-income families." A wide range of organizations, including the Center for American Progress, the National Low Income Housing Coalition, and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities have called on Congress to fund one to two million new vouchers over the next ten years to reduce poverty and homelessness, help low-income seniors and people with disabilities to live with dignity, and enable families to access better educational and economic opportunities.

This year, we ask again for your support in fully funding both Section 8 rental assistance programs, as well as in providing additional funding for new vouchers to help meet the large and growing need for affordable housing. Thank you for your attention to this matter and your continued support of these important programs.

Sincerely,

Jerrold Nadler

Ric Mahut

Carol Beckson Orr

James Oberstar

Charles B. Rangel

Kay A. Wagner

Eliot L. Engel

Paul Blumenthal

Nydia M. Velázquez
Jenny Balch

Juanita
J. L. M. H.

Melanie White

Vernon E. Ehlers

R.

Cheryl Smith

Michael H. Meckau

Quas Carson

Jim Van Holle

Mazie K. Hirano

Michael E. Capen

Rock

Carol Shea-Power Q. C. C.

Kurt Holt

B. M. Holt

Niki Longas

Lois Cappe

Jim McFadden

RC

Sam C. Stein

Al Green

Doris O. Matseu

Steph. Hynd

Jim McDevitt

Am

Luis V. Gutierrez

T. J. Welch

Keith Ede

Rosa L. Delaur

Charles Jozatz Neil Abernethy

Joe Hunt

Members of Congress who signed the Nadler/Velazquez letter
requesting 200,000 Section 8 incremental vouchers and full renewal funding for both
Tenant-Based and Project-Based Section 8 Programs

- 1 Jerrold Nadler
- 2 Nydia Velázquez
- 3 Tammy Baldwin
- 4 André Carson
- 5 Anthony Weiner
- 6 Chellie Pingree
- 7 Dennis Cardoza
- 8 Mazie Hirono
- 9 Paul W. Hodes
- 10 Henry A. Waxman
- 11 Jim McDermott
- 12 Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
- 13 James A. Himes
- 14 James L. Oberstar
- 15 Charles B. Rangel
- 16 Lois Capps
- 17 Doris O. Matsui
- 18 Jesse L. Jackson Jr
- 19 Eliot L. Engel
- 20 Al Green
- 21 Chris Van Hollen
- 22 Vernon J. Ehlers
- 23 Joseph Crowley
- 24 Michael E. Capuano
- 25 Stephen F. Lynch
- 26 William D. Delahunt
- 27 John M. McHugh
- 28 Michael H. Michaud
- 29 James P. McGovern
- 30 Rush D. Holt
- 31 Russ Carnahan
- 32 Carol Shea-Porter
- 33 Maxine Waters
- 34 Earl Blumenauer
- 35 Christopher H. Smith
- 36 Niki Tsongas
- 37 Luis V. Gutierrez
- 38 Timothy J. Walz
- 39 Keith Ellison
- 40 Neil Abercrombie
- 41 Rosa L. DeLauro
- 42 Charles A. Gonzalez
- 43 Joe Sestak